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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/828,547	04/19/2004	Lukas P.P.P. van Ginneken	MDAI.001US3	3884

36257 7590 08/01/2008
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EXAMINER

SIEK, VUTHE

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2825

NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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08/01/2008

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/828,547	Applicant(s) VAN GINNEKEN, LUKAS P.P.P.	
	Examiner Vuthe Siek	Art Unit 2825	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 May 2008.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 4-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 4-25 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This office action is in response to application 10/828,547 and amendment filed on 5/7/2008. Claims 2 and 4-15 remain pending in the application.

Double Patenting

2. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

3. Claims 2 and 4-15 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-54 of U.S. Patent No. 6,453,446 B1. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claims in the instant application and patent are substantial similar. They are related to an automated method for designing an IC layout in order to meet timing constraints. The patent claims anticipate the claims in the instant application.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

5. Claims 2 and 4-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tsay et al. (5,461,576).

6. As to claim 2, Tsay et al. teach an automated method for designing an integrated circuit layout with a computer (summary) comprising: (a) selecting a plurality of cells that are intended to be used in the integrated circuit layout (selection of cells from cell libraries 11 at least in Fig. 3); (b) determining initial delay values associated with the cells prior to determining an initial placement of the cells (initial delay values before feed through placement shown in Fig. 3) and (c) performing an initial placement of the cells (then performing initial placement shown in Fig. 3), including determining an initial size or area of the cells in response to the initial placement (at least see Fig. 3, 6; col. 12 lines 6-14; col. 5 lines 24-67; col. 6 lines 1-67).

7. As to claim 4, Tsay et al. teach adjusting the initial delay values of the cells if necessary to meet predetermined timing constraints (at least see Fig. 2, 4, 6; summary).

8. As to claim 5, Tsay et al. teach determining a size or area of the cells that will approximately maintain the adjusted delay values (at least see Fig. 2, 4, 6; summary).

9. As to claim 6, Tsay et al. teach after determining the initial size or area of the cells, further adjusting the size or area of the cells in order to approximately maintain the initial delay values (at least see Fig. 2, 4, 6; summary).

10. As to claim 7, Tsay et al. teach routing the digital circuit to generate the integrated circuit layout using a finalized size or area of the selected plurality of cells (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary) .
11. As to claim 8, Tsay et al. teach wherein the initial delay values are determined using gain (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
12. As to claim 9, Tsay et al. teach wherein the initial delay values are determined using logical effort (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
13. As to claim 10, Tsay et al. teach wherein the initial delay values are determined by finding a preferred gain of the cells (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
14. As to claim 11, Tsay et al. teach wherein the preferred gain of the cells is determined using a continuous buffering assumption (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary). Note that using a buffering assumption is known to practitioners and it is inherently within the art in order to improve delay to meet all path timing constraints in an integrated circuit design.
15. As to claim 12, Tsay et al. teach wherein the initial delay values are determined during library analysis (Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
16. As to claim 13, wherein the initial delay values are determined using a typical load of the cells (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
17. As to claim 14, wherein the typical load is determined based on gain considerations (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).
18. As to claim 15, wherein the size or area of the cells is variable and not fixed at the time the cells are selected (at least see Fig. 2, 3, 6; summary).

19. Applicants are requested to consider in their entirety the cited reference used in the rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vuthe Siek whose telephone number is (571) 272-1906.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jack Chiang can be reached on (571) 272-7483. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Vuthe Siek/
Primary Examiner, A.U. 2825